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MAY 10 2000

Appl. No. 09/485,298

TECH CENTER 1800

III. CONCISE EXPLANATION OF THE RELEVANCE
(check at least one box)

a. DOCUMENTS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The attached patents, publications, or other information in the English language do not require a statement of relevancy.

b. DOCUMENTS NOT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

A concise explanation of the relevance of all patents, publications, or other information listed that is not in the English language is as follows:

c. ENGLISH LANGUAGE SEARCH REPORT

An English language version of the search report or action that indicates the degree of relevance found by the foreign office is attached, thereby satisfying the requirement for a concise explanation. See MPEP 609(A)(3).

d. OTHER

The following additional information is provided for the Examiner's consideration.

Japanese Examined Patent Publication Nos. Hei 4-67957 and 4-67960 belong to the same patent family, therefore, only one abstract was provided for both references.

FEES

- IV. THIS IDS IS BEING FILED UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b):
(check one box)
- a. within three months of the filing date of a national application (37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)(1)). No fee or statement is required.
- b. within three months of the date of entry of the national stage as set forth in § 1.491 in an international application (37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)(2)). No fee or statement is required.
- c. before the mailing date of a first Action on the merits (37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)(3)). No fee or statement is required. In the event that a first Office Action on the merits has been issued, please consider this IDS under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c) and see the statement under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(e) below, or, if no statement has been made, charge our deposit account in the amount of \$240.00 as required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p).

- V. THIS IDS IS BEING FILED UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c):
(check one box)

before the mailing date of a Final Office Action under 37 C.F.R. § 1.113 (See 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c)(1)) or before the mailing date of a Notice of Allowance under 37 C.F.R. § 1.311 (See 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c)(2)).

- a. No statement; therefore, a fee in the amount of \$240.00 as required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p).
or
b. See the statement below. No fee is required.

VI. STATEMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(e) (check only one box)

The undersigned hereby states that

- a. each item of information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this IDS; or
- b. no item of information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application and, to the best of my knowledge after making reasonable inquiry, was known to any individual designated in 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this statement.
- c. Some of the items of information were cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office. As to this information, the undersigned states that each item of information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this IDS. As to the remaining information, the undersigned hereby states that no item of this remaining information contained in the IDS was cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office in a counterpart foreign application and, to the best of my knowledge after making reasonable inquiry, was known to any individual designated in 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of this statement.

VII. PAYMENT OF FEES (check one box)

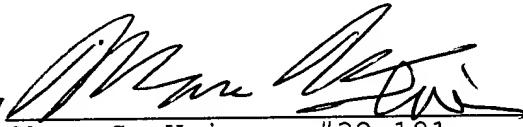
- A check in the amount of \$240.00 as required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p) is enclosed for the above-identified fee.
- Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2448 in the amount required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p) for the above-indicated fee. A triplicate copy of this paper is attached.
- No fee is required.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning this IDS, he/she is requested to contact the undersigned. If it is determined that this IDS has been filed under the wrong rule, the PTO is requested to consider this IDS under the proper rule (with a petition if necessary) and charge the appropriate fee to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
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MSW/cpw
1422-411P

- Enclosures: PTO-1449
 Documents
 Foreign Search Report
 Fee
 Other:

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